11-2012

Find Your Funding Source

Office of the Vice President for Research

Western Michigan University

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WMU ScholarWorks Citation
Office of the Vice President for Research, "Find Your Funding Source" (2012). Research and Dessert. Paper 16.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/research_events/16

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Find Your Funding Source

Before you start your funding search:

**Identify your search criteria.** Your criteria will include key words, subject matter, geographic area of project, people or groups who will benefit from your research, amount of funding needed and other factors that will help you target and refine your search.

Grant Sources:

- The government -- often federal, sometimes state, and occasionally local
- Private businesses and corporations
- Foundations

All leads are good leads, but, depending on your area of expertise, here are some databases you may want to check regularly.

1. Grants.gov
2. Grant Advisor
3. Pivot (Community of Science) http://pivot.cos.com/
4. Sci-Val - funding.scival.com
5. Foundation Directory Online – fconline.foundationcenter.org - your department will need to subscribe to this database or ask OVPR for help.

**Your best resource for finding funding is the OVPR web page!**

wmich.edu/research
Start Your Search Here

#1

Go to: www.wmich.edu/research

Click on FUNDING SOURCES
#2

Click on EXTERNAL TO WMU

(Also, be sure to check out INTERNAL TO WMU to find funding sponsored by WMU and OVPR)
Choose one of the five categories to start:

- ONLINE SEARCH DATABASES
- COMMUNITY OF SCIENCE
- FEDERAL AGENCIES
- STATE OF MICHIGAN AGENCIES
- PRIVATE FUNDING AGENCIES
Your Research and Program Officer (RPO)

Your RPO will help you navigate through all aspects of the research enterprise from finding funding opportunities to submitting a strong grant proposal.

Find your RPO. Call her early in the process.

Go to: www.wmich.edu/research/findresearchofficers.html

Click on OVPR Staff
Click on Find Staff
Click on Your College
Before you apply...

**Investigate the top sponsors on your list**
Learn as much as you can about the organization. Read the mission, see what they fund, how much they award and determine the organization’s funding priorities in the current funding cycle. Read what they DO NOT fund.

**Know the guidelines and follow them**
Read the guidelines carefully – they vary from sponsor to sponsor. Following the guidelines is very important; some sponsors will discard a proposal if all guidelines are not met.

**Read the review criteria**
Find out how your proposal will be judged and be sure your proposal responds to every criterion. Often the criteria are published or can be requested.

**Read funded proposals**
Call the funding agency and politely request a copy of a funded proposal. If it is a government agency, proposals are part of the public record and can be obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. You may also request a copy of a funded grant proposal directly from the funded party. Most often awardees are happy to share.

**Ask questions**
Once you have thoroughly read the request for proposal (RFP) or funding announcement, it is perfectly acceptable to ask questions. Think through your questions carefully and make sure they are not covered in the RFP, the sponsor’s web site, or other obvious places. You want to make a good impression and you do not want to waste the program officer’s time.

**Call the program officer**
Often this sounds intimidating, but remember, funding agencies are suppose to give away money - not hold on to it. Most program officers will be receptive to a conversation. Be prepared before you make the call. Your OVPR research and program officer can help you plan.

**Who do you know?**
This question is probably most relevant when seeking funding from foundations and corporations. Do you know someone on the organization’s board? Do you know someone who works for, or volunteers for, the organization? Can you partner with, or get support from, someone who has received funding from the organization and is well respected? Sometimes a personal connection helps.

**Use a quality circle review**
When you have a proposal draft, find experts who might be willing to review your draft and give advice. Your chair, associate dean and OVPR can often help identify people willing to help.